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**SENATOR BRET ALLAIN RELEASES STATEMENT REGARDING GOVERNOR'S
ANNOUNCEMENT RELATIVE TO THE FLOOD CONTROL STRUCTURE ON BAYOU
CHENE**

Senator Bret Allain (R-District 21) released the following statement regarding Governor Edwards's announcement of \$80 million (\$5 million for engineering and design and \$75 million for construction) that will be used to build a permanent flood control structure on Bayou Chene:

"After many years of proving this project's worth and fighting for funding over two administrations, I am thrilled that District 21 and our surrounding communities will be getting more permanent protection from seasonal flooding and the high-water threats that tropical systems bring.

"Long before my service in the Senate, local officials and business leaders laid the groundwork for this day when the first temporary structure was put in place to help in the flood fight of 1973. That effort paved the way for the successful work led by the St. Mary Levee District in 2011 when our area was threatened with historic flooding.

"In addition, a similar project was undertaken in 2016 using much of the infrastructure in place from 2011. Three successes, each with their own unique characteristics, served as evidence that a permanent structure on Bayou Chene was a necessity.

"When running for the Senate in 2011, I knew that this project was going to be one I prioritized more than any other because I saw its success in action. Early in 2012, a draft of the state's master plan on coastal erosion and flood protection omitted Bayou Chene as a future project.

"With the help of Rep. Sam Jones and other local leaders, we successfully got Bayou Chene into the master plan in 2014, a critical step in making the project eligible for funding.

"For many years, whenever I had the ear of anyone with the Governor's Office or the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA), one of my first questions was always on Bayou Chene and what we could do to get it done. A special thanks is owed to everyone that listened to our needs and made

today possible, notably Garret Graves who was the director of CPRA at the time we got the project into the master plan and Chip Kline who is the current director of CPRA. At the local level, leaders like Tim Matte, Bill Hidalgo, and the current and former members of the St. Mary Levee District deserve recognition for their tireless efforts as well.

“Another aspect of our work that I am proud of is the fact that this is the culmination of work by both the Jindal and Edwards administrations. In today’s political environment, these bipartisan efforts should be the norm, not the exception. Good ideas and worthy causes are not exclusive to one side or another as evidenced by Governor Jindal’s commitment to this project in 2014 and Governor Edwards’s follow through on that promise now that he serves as our governor. Special thanks to Governor Edwards because without his support and the commitment of his coastal director, Chip Kline this project would not have been done.

“More than anything, today’s announcement by Governor Edwards proves that persistence at the local level can cause action at the state level. It has taken some time to get here, but it is good to be able to see the finish line.”

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